



NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHWEST REGION
SALMON RECOVERY WORKSHOPS
FEEDBACK REPORT
MAY, 2001

I. Introduction

This report summarizes a series of Endangered Species Act (ESA) workshops the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) sponsored in Oregon and Washington from September to November, 2000. The workshop goals were to (1) provide an overview of the ESA and salmon recovery; (2) identify and discuss the options and tools available for complying with the ESA; (3) inform participants about the 4(d) rules published by NMFS in July 2000; and (4) provide an opportunity for participants to discuss these issues with NMFS staff members. The ESA workshops were well attended, provided an opportunity for active dialogue between NMFS staff and participants, and generated important questions on a wide range of topics. This report provides feedback to participants about what NMFS learned from the workshops, identifies next steps for NMFS and answers key questions raised by participants. It includes:

- A summary of workshop participants' evaluation comments;
- Next steps for NMFS; and
- Appendix A: Responses to key issues identified at the workshops.

NMFS extends its appreciation and thanks to the individuals who attended the workshops and welcomes a continued dialogue with participants. Finally, NMFS would like to thank our co-sponsors, particularly *For Sake of the Salmon*, our community hosts, elected officials, and others who promoted and actively participated in the workshops.

Summary

From September to November, 2000, NMFS conducted 19 workshops in 12 communities in Oregon and Washington; their purpose was to share information with the public about the July 2000 4(d) rule for 14 populations of salmon and steelhead. One thousand and thirty-nine citizens representing cities, counties, state and Federal agencies, watershed councils, and a diverse range of interest groups attended the workshops. Thousands more requested that workshop materials be mailed to them, or accessed information through NMFS' web page. Based on participants' evaluations, the workshops were successful in identifying ESA options for local jurisdictions, communicating information about the 4(d) rules, and giving participants a chance to interact with NMFS staff. NMFS learned that future workshops could be improved by narrowing the number of topics or allowing more time to address issues, and providing more information on salmon

habitat needs. As a follow-up to the workshops, NMFS will post this report on its web page, review and update the workshop materials, and continue to work with jurisdictions and interest groups to implement the 4(d) rule.

II. Summary of Workshop Evaluation Comments

This section mirrors the questions in the workshop evaluation forms that participants completed at the end of the workshop. The first section asked participants to rank their responses based on a scale from one (poor) to five (excellent), the other questions sought information about how the workshop could be improved and what other topics should be addressed in future workshops.

1. Overall Evaluation of the Workshop.

A. *Usefulness of the workshop in understanding salmon habitat needs.* Based on a five-point rating scale from excellent (five) to poor (one), 41% of respondents gave the workshops a “three” rating. Thirty-six percent rated this aspect of the workshops as a “four.” In written comments, many participants correctly noted that NMFS had not designed the workshops to focus on salmon habitat needs but rather on the ESA and options for compliance. Some attendees, however, expressed an interest in receiving more basic information on salmon habitat issues.

B. *Usefulness of the workshop in helping you understand ESA/4(d) rule options to conserve salmon.* Fifty-four percent of respondents rated this aspect of the workshop as a “four,” 25 % as a “three,” and 13% as a “five.”

2. Comments About the Overall Meeting.

Workshops Valuable: Most respondents found the workshop to be valuable, well organized, and informative. Many participants appreciated the time for question and answer sessions and valued the chance to talk with NMFS staff. Several participants also commented that the afternoon break-out sessions were very valuable for discussing the specifics of individual 4(d) limits.

Good Overview of the ESA: Several participants commented on the usefulness of having a general introduction to and overview of the ESA. They appreciated learning about NMFS’ ESA responsibilities and how the 4(d) rule works within that context. Participants also valued the information and discussions about the ESA sections 7, 10, and 4(d).

Scope of Workshop Overly Ambitious: Some participants felt the workshop was rushed, and that too much material and technical information was presented. They recommended limiting the scope of the workshop by presenting less information, focusing on selected topics, and allowing more time for individual topics.

3. Were the topics of the workshop a high priority for you?

Almost all participants said that the workshop topics were a high priority for them.

4. If you answered yes to No. 3 above, please share what information, insights or approaches were helpful.

Printed Materials and Resources: Participants stated that the 4(d) submittal process flow chart from the *4(d) Implementation Binder* and the NMFS *Habitat Matrix of Pathways and Indicators* as valuable resources. Some participants felt the case study was a valuable learning tool, and some found the *Assessment Checklist* helpful, but said they would like more time to discuss specifics.

Practical Approaches: Some participants identified the value of learning practical approaches to addressing ESA requirements. In particular, many respondents expressed appreciation for information on Limit No. 10 for Routine Road Maintenance.

5. If future workshops are scheduled, what other topics would you like to discuss at these forums? Please refer to Appendix A of this report for information about many of these topics.

Properly Functioning Condition: Several respondents expressed interest in learning more about Properly Functioning Condition, especially in the agricultural and urban contexts.

Specific Actions to Address the ESA: Many participants identified a need for more specific information about how local governments can make their programs and actions more “fish friendly,” especially with respect to managing utilities, parks, roads, and water supply systems. In particular, some stressed the need for NMFS to create a template to help routine road maintenance activities comply with the appropriate limit. Some wanted a better understanding of how to evaluate potential ESA liability risks and balance these with the cost of implementing programs that address listed species needs. A number of individuals expressed an interest in learning more about funding sources for implementing ESA projects.

ESA Permit Options: Several participants expressed interest in learning more about section 7 consultations and how biological assessments and biological opinions are developed and reviewed. Others expressed interest in habitat conservation plans and wanted to discuss how the section 7, 10 and 4(d) options apply to a range of on-the-ground projects.

Model Ordinances: Some respondents wanted to review model ordinances and 4(d) rule technical information and discuss how to apply these to real world examples.

Water Law and Drinking Water: Participants identified a need for more information about how the ESA and 4(d) rule affect the mechanisms and processes for supplying municipal

drinking water. Others expressed an interest in exploring the relationship between the ESA and state water law.

Linkage with State Programs: Participants expressed an interest in learning more about how certain local and state programs link with the ESA and the 4(d) rule. These include Washington's Water Resource Inventory Area process, Oregon's land use planning program, Washington's Growth Management Act, and Washington's Shoreline Management Act. One respondent wanted to analyze the links between the 4(d) rule, wetlands inventories, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Total Maximum Daily Loads program, and local planning efforts.

Habitat Restoration and Watershed Planning: Several participants suggested holding future workshops on: (1) determining riparian setback widths; (2) developing watershed conservation plans; (3) watershed planning; (4) habitat restoration, restoration permits, and technical assistance for watershed councils.

Agriculture and Forestry Activities: Respondents were also interested in discussing ESA issues in relation to agricultural practices, diking and drainage districts, and forest management practices, and, particularly, herbicide use.

Implications of Oregon's Measure 7 Initiative: Several participants were curious about—and suggested further discussion on—Oregon's Measure 7 property compensation initiative and its implications for local governments.

Streamlining the Permit Process: Participants expressed interest in a follow-up workshop to focus on streamlining the permit system for instream habitat restoration activities.

Salmon Biology: Several participants wanted more information on salmon biology and cautioned NMFS not to assume that the public understands the biological needs of salmon.

III. Next Steps

Based on the recommendations made by workshop participants and NMFS staff members, NMFS plans to do the following:

- Post the workshop **Feedback Report** on NMFS' NWR web page;
- Inform workshop participants by email that the **Feedback Report** is available on NMFS' web page;
- Review and update the printed materials used at the workshops and ensure that they are easily accessible on the NMFS' web page;
- Respond to individual requests for 4(d) rule and ESA information and presentations as staff resources allow; and
- Post ordinances that successfully address the 4(d) rule on the NMFS' web page.

We should note, however, that there are no plans to conduct additional 4(d) rule workshops at this time.

How to Get More Information

All the printed materials distributed at the workshops can be found on NMFS' northwest region web page (www.nwr.noaa.gov) under the 4(d) rules link. This information includes the final 4(d) rule *Federal Register* notice, *A Citizens Guide to the 4(d) Rule*, and the *4(d) Rule Implementation Binder for Threatened Salmon and Steelhead on the West Coast*. Additional information and maps are also available on the NMFS' web page.